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General and complete disarmament: observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Information from the Government of the Republic of Cuba on measures taken in fulfilment of the objectives of resolution 52/38 E

1. In accordance with resolution 67/96 issued by the Cuban Minister of Science, Technology and the Environment, a National Centre for Biological Security has been established. Its objectives include that of organizing, directing and monitoring measures intended to fulfil the commitments Cuba has entered into in international legal instruments, for example the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, although the Republic of Cuba has no biological weapons, nor does it possess facilities for their production.

In order to achieve those objectives, the aforementioned Centre includes a Department of Safeguards.

2. The Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment analyses and evaluates documents issued by the conferences of States parties convened to examine international instruments on weapons of mass destruction to which Cuba is a party, in order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives and aims embodied in those documents.

3. With regard to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Republic of Cuba,

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as a party which does not have chemical weapons nor facilities for their production, has established a national system for the identification, verification and monitoring of the existence of these types of substances in any quantity no matter how small, throughout the national territory, although it does not possess chemicals in quantities which must be declared under that Convention.

Moreover, the system makes it possible to verify the conditions under which those chemicals are used, transferred or stored, ensuring that the approved environmental norms are observed.

4. The Republic of Cuba has adopted a set of measures forming a solid resource in the environmental field, which help to preserve and continue the progress Cuba has made in environmental protection. Those measures are:

(a) Giving environmental protection constitutional rank by including it explicitly in article 27 of the 1976 Constitution of the Republic. That article was amended in 1992 to strengthen the concept of integration of the environment into sustainable economic and social development;

(b) Establishment of the National Commission for Environmental Protection and Conservation of Natural Resources in 1976;

(c) Promulgation of Act No. 33 of January 1981, entitled "Structure, Organization and Functioning of the National System of Environmental Protection and its Governing Body";

(d) Approval of the National Environment and Development Programme, the Cuban adaptation of Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992;

(e) Establishment of the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment in 1994;

(f) Elaboration of the National Environmental Strategy in 1997;

(g) Promulgation of Act No. 81 of June 1997, entitled the "Environment Act".

At the present time, other measures are being studied which will be reported to the United Nations Secretary-General once they have been approved by the appropriate national bodies.